

GCSE Examiners' Report

Business

GCSE

Summer 2025

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Introduction

Our Principal Examiners' report provides valuable feedback on the recent assessment series. It has been written by our Principal Examiners and Principal Moderators after the completion of marking and moderation, and details how candidates have performed in each component.

This report opens with a summary of candidates' performance, including the assessment objectives/skills/topics/themes being tested, and highlights the characteristics of successful performance and where performance could be improved. It then looks in detail at each unit, pinpointing aspects that proved challenging to some candidates and suggesting some reasons as to why that might be.¹

The information found in this report provides valuable insight for practitioners to support their teaching and learning activity. We would also encourage practitioners to share this document – in its entirety or in part – with their learners to help with exam preparation, to understand how to avoid pitfalls and to add to their revision toolbox.

Further support

Document	Description	Link
Professional Learning / CPD	Eduqas offers an extensive programme of online and face-to-face Professional Learning events. Access interactive feedback, review example candidate responses, gain practical ideas for the classroom and put questions to our dedicated team by registering for one of our events here.	https://www.eduqas.co.uk/home/professional-learning/
Past papers	Access the bank of past papers for this qualification, including the most recent assessments. Please note that we do not make past papers available on the public website until 12 months after the examination.	Portal by WJEC or on the Eduqas subject page
Grade boundary information	Grade boundaries are the minimum number of marks needed to achieve each grade. For unitised specifications grade boundaries are expressed on a Uniform Mark Scale (UMS). UMS grade boundaries remain the same every year as the range of UMS mark percentages allocated to a particular grade does not change. UMS grade boundaries are published at overall subject and component level. For linear specifications, a single grade is awarded for the subject, rather than for each component that contributes towards the overall grade. Grade boundaries are published on results day.	For unitised specifications click here: Results and Grade Boundaries and PRS (eduqas.co.uk)

¹ Please note that where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.

Exam Results Analysis	Eduqas provides information to examination centres via the WJEC Portal. This is restricted to centre staff only. Access is granted to centre staff by the Examinations Officer at the centre.	Portal by WJEC
Classroom Resources	Access our extensive range of FREE classroom resources, including blended learning materials, exam walk-throughs and knowledge organisers to support teaching and learning.	https://resources.eduqas.co.uk/
Bank of Professional Learning materials	Access our bank of Professional Learning materials from previous events from our secure website and additional pre-recorded materials available in the public domain.	Portal by WJEC or on the Eduqas subject page.
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Executive Summary

Both examination papers were of a similar standard to previous examination series.

Candidates continue to generally demonstrate a wide coverage of the specification content. However, there were once again some obvious gaps in knowledge and often candidates showed knowledge but were unable to demonstrate understanding of that knowledge. Many candidates were unable to develop their responses beyond simple recall and either did not attempt to try to demonstrate understanding or made incorrect developments.

In both examination papers using the given data or context is key to achieving marks beyond AO1. All the data in the stems, scenarios and case studies are there for a reason and in many cases can help candidates frame their responses. However, too many candidates continue to ignore this data and offer responses that are contextualised in the data, subsequently missing out on AO2 marks. Centres should focus on developing the skill of application and allowing and progressing candidates' ability to use both qualitative and quantitative data in order to explain, analyse and evaluate specific contexts.

It is worth reminding centres of the weightings of the AOs, these can be found in the specification. AO2 contributes 35% of the total marks (the same as AO1) and by addressing the issues around application it follows that candidates will be able to access more marks in both papers.

It is to be noted, once again, that just using the name of the business in the response is not valid AO2. This was most prevalent in Component 2. The resource material gives detailed information about the business and is set out in a way that is easy for candidates to draw out the information to use in their responses. But candidates continue to either ignore this data or under use it, preferring to give generic responses and not fully answering the question.

There was evidence in both papers that quite a few candidates did not read the question carefully and often their responses were not answering the set question.

In the higher tariff questions, to obtain the higher marks candidates need to develop their responses and move beyond simplistic comments. Too many candidates miss out on achieving the higher bands for AO3 by giving superficial explanations and unsupported judgements, which are often one sided.

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COMPONENT 1: BUSINESS DYNAMICS

Overview of the Component

This paper followed a similar structure to the previous GCSE Business papers; 100 marks were split into 5 sections of 20 marks each. The first 5 questions featured mini-scenarios, and the following 3 questions focused on a range of real businesses as well as 1 fictitious business. Candidates were expected to apply some of their answers to the specific business. Subsequent papers will continue to follow this style.

Many candidates attempted a large amount of this paper, and questions had a completion rate ranging from 99% to 79%. However, this is lower than the previous series. The paper this year contained two multiple choice tick box questions and one extended response synoptic question that tested candidates' knowledge across a range of areas from the specification. All extended response questions had over 90% attempt rate which was pleasing to see and has risen since the last series.

Most candidates are not able to use their data well when answering AO2 questions. In addition, candidates are not using a wide range of data available to them which limits their answers. More candidates are now picking up marks at AO3 which is good to see but again much of the analysis is limited, with little development.

Comments on individual questions/sections

- Q.1** A well attempted question with a high mean score of 1.7 shows candidates are secure in this knowledge area.
- Q.2** Another well attempted series of questions with candidates on average getting 1 mark for 2(d).
- Q.3**
- (a) This question raised some confusion with candidates incorrectly assuming the business was offering a commercial service and was in the public sector.
 - (b) Candidates were able to accurately use the data in the table for most responses, but candidates did struggle to expand on why this may be useful to the business.
- Q.4**
- (a) Leniency was shown on this question, and we did not expect candidates to use the exact wording of the sales process however some candidates struggled to apply sufficiently to the used car scenario which resulted in a low mean mark of 1.5.
 - (b) This was answered well for the most part, but some candidates had mixed up on the job and off the job training.
 - (c) The common error on this question was that candidates had not added the numbers together to calculate the total commission or they had incorrectly calculated 20% of the total instead of 2%.
 - (d) Whilst this did have some good answers, common mistakes involved the candidates focusing on the benefits of commission to an employee not a business.
- Q.5**
- (a) This question was a struggle for most with a mean score of 0.8, but a 96.6% attempt rate. Candidates struggled to grasp the definition of cash and were often defining sales revenue in its place. Profit was, on the whole, defined better.
 - (b) Candidates seemed comfortable with calculating the missing payments from the cash flow forecast.
 - (c) Many candidates understood this question accurately but were not always able to develop for the AO3.
 - (d) For Q.5 (d)(i) candidates who dropped marks often gave answers about market research in general rather than focusing on the accurate and up to date part of the question. More often than not candidates were able to identify the limitations of the market research for Q.5 (d)(ii).

- (e) One of the main problems that candidates faced on this question is that they did not refer to the cash flow forecast data. This has limited their responses, and it is imperative that in future questions candidates use all available data, especially if they are asked about improving a cash flow. Many responses were in context, but candidates had only used the market research data to back up their answers. On the whole the coverage of marketing mix was good, but some candidates struggled to demonstrate understanding of the differences between revenue and costs.
- Q.6**
- (a) Candidates were often able to state a feature of a charity, but most did struggle to find 2 different features. With the second part of the question some candidates just repeated the features of a charity, rather than explaining the aims of a charity and a LTD company.
- (b) Entrepreneurial characteristics were clearly identified in most cases, and most candidates were able to identify a financial risk of being an entrepreneur. On the next part of the question some candidates chose inappropriate rewards such as fame which is not awardable in this instance.
- (c) Clearly the candidates have an affinity for the environment as these questions had high response rates at 98.5% and a mean score of 1.7 and 1.4 respectively. Candidates dropped marks on the second part of the question mostly at the AO3 level with developments not being sufficient to award the marks.
- (d) The second-best scoring extended response question with a mean score of 3.5, candidates demonstrated a clear grasp of the benefits of technology. Some candidates unfortunately failed to analyse the impacts on both the business and its customers and subsequently developed a one-sided response that was unable to be marked as generously as others who had considered both factors.
- Q.7**
- (a) There are clearly some gaps in candidates' knowledge of the supply chain as many candidates did not answer with the correct term on this question.
- (b) There was also confusion here with many candidates suggesting internal methods of finance instead of internal methods of growth.
- (c) This question proved difficult for candidates to apply to the given context with many candidates struggling to collect application marks on this answer. It was also apparent that candidates had focused on the smaller business and their benefits rather than the impact to Sainsburys. Candidates are advised to read the questions carefully to ensure that what they are writing answers the question that has been asked.
- (d) Many candidates collected marks on this question, where dropped, some candidates had confused themselves by not using the percentage change formula correctly.

- (e) & (e) (ii) is the worst attempted question on the whole paper with only 79% of candidates attempting to answer it which is strange as the previous question that asks for the formula should have been the trickier question. Nevertheless, going forward it is worth focusing on candidates understanding of how to use net profit margin formulas.
 - (f) Candidates, on the whole, picked up marks on this question with a clear understanding of how online advertising can help a business. The best answers included the relevant data from the case study and some candidates tried to balance their analysis with the drawbacks of online advertising too. Where candidates underperformed, they had spoken about e-commerce or m-commerce rather than online advertising specifically.
- Q.8**
- (a) The lowest facility factor of the entire paper at 32.8, candidates could identify motives for entrepreneurs in general, but this question was entirely AO2 and required them to focus in on Max and the case study specifically.
 - (b) Candidates in most cases clearly understood what branding is and why it is useful for a business but again there was a lack of development at AO3 to enable candidates to gain the higher marks.
 - (c) Again candidates struggled with the nature of this question as it was specifically asking about Rugby Tots and the answers given had to specific the segments of the market in context.
 - (d) Candidates could often identify the difference between a franchisee and a franchisor but their responses often were just limited to saying that one owns and sells the rights and the other buys and uses the rights. Candidates who expanded on these answers with more detail were few and far between sadly.
 - (e) The last question on the paper typically is answered poorly or has a high percentage of candidates leaving it blank normally. This was not the case on this paper as 90.5% of candidates had attempted the question and the 4.5 mean score was the highest of all extended response questions. Candidates had clearly used data in most cases and had written some good advice on which decision was best.

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COMPONENT 2: BUSINESS CONSIDERATIONS

Overview of the Component

This paper followed a similar structure to the previous GCSE Business papers; 60 marks were split into 2 sections of 30 marks each. The first section was based on a real business; Big Bus Tours and the second section was a fictional business based around pre-prepared meal kits.

Most candidates attempted much of this paper and questions had a completion rate ranging from 98.8% to 91.4%. This is slightly lower than last year which had a low of 92.7% however it is still pleasing to see how accessible these papers are to the majority of candidates. The lowest attempted question was not the 12 marker which is the first time this has happened for a couple of years and actually was attempted by nearly 95% of candidates (94.8%).

Whilst general business knowledge was good, similar to last year, many candidates did not use the wide range of data available to them and often their answers were not in context. It was also apparent that some candidates struggled to develop their answers and simply listed facts in some cases which is in keeping with the AO3 struggles that candidates demonstrated on Component 1 this year.

Comments on individual questions/sections

- Q.1**
- (a)** A question that should have been more straightforward than it was, candidates often got confused and talked about external finance instead of a takeover or acquisition.
 - (b)** Whilst it was clear that candidates had good knowledge of what horizontal integration was, candidates struggled to understand the advantages of horizontal integration and instead often listed generic responses such as “they know what they’re doing – so will be more successful” which is not awardable content. This question had one of the lowest facility factors at 33.1.
 - (c)** Some candidates gained good marks here for well-developed responses about the features of a limited company.
 - (d)** A well answered question with candidates having a good grasp of the knowledge and understanding of what a competitive market is. Where candidates dropped marks, they did not use the clearly signposted content from the resource material to support their answers which limited their responses.
 - (e)**
 - (i)** Was one of the easiest on the paper with a mean score of 1 mark, this question was answered well, demonstrating candidates are capable of using data sources and applying their knowledge to specific questions.

- (ii) Some candidates were penalised for not writing their answer out correctly, instead of putting £129.40 they instead wrote 129.4. When the question was asking for the cost of tickets, and AO2 marks are being awarded, candidates must make sure their answers are presented in the correct format.
 - (iii) Another quantitative skills question that was answered well with candidates showing their confidence in being able to not only gather specific data from the case study but be able to carry out a specific calculation on it. A mean mark of 1.6 and an attempt rate of 97.2% was pleasing to see.
 - (f) Candidates demonstrated a good knowledge of pricing strategies on this question but many of them chose price strategies that are not in keeping with the context of the case study. A common mistake was to suggest penetration pricing for example, which is not really applicable in the given scenario. When these pricing strategies were suggested, marks were more limited.
 - (g) There has been a clear improvement in candidates' knowledge of what multichannel distribution is compared to the last time this type of question was asked. Candidates also found it accessible due to the amount of information about the channels that Big Bus Tours use; where candidates could match these up, they did score well. Unfortunately, many candidates did not focus on the evaluation and instead only focused on a one-sided response which limited their overall AO3 marks.
- Q.2**
- (a) The lowest attempted question at only 91.4% and was the lowest facility factor on the paper at 18.9. Candidates that did attempt this question mostly had an understanding of a dynamic environment. However, they were not able to apply it to this given context. A common incorrect response was that candidates incorrectly thought that dynamic environment meant that they had customers from all over the world.
 - (b) This question was answered better than the last time it was examined. Candidates could often identify benefits of being within the EU, but some had difficulties explaining these benefits and, as such, were not able to collect the AO3 responses. A common mistake on this question was that candidates often said a benefit was "cheaper transport costs" which is not acceptable unless explicitly linked to the lack of tariffs.
 - (c) The majority of candidates scored well on this question (1.7 mean mark) and marks were awarded for any valid description of the chart. Candidates could accurately state what trends were evident in the chart.
 - (d) The difficulty in this question was that candidates needed to make sure they had selected relevant information from the case study. A common incorrect answer was that candidates talked about catering for different cultures; this is not an ethical decision by the business but one of diversification.

- (e) Multinationals have been understood well mostly; however some candidates only focused on the sales side of multinationals which could also be construed that their understanding is only that of international trade. Candidates who achieved higher marks made sure they applied their answers to all aspects of being a multinational business, for example talking about recruitment as well as having a larger market to sell to. Candidates are to be reminded again that they should read the question and not write responses that waste their time. A fair few candidates tried to balance their responses with disadvantages of multinationals and whilst this has not been penalised, it has wasted the candidates own time.
- (f) As previously stated it was pleasing to see the higher percentage of candidates that attempted this question as well as a high mean mark of 6.8 across the responses. Normally the synoptic questions can be difficult for candidates but clearly, they have been taught well. Candidates who dropped marks did not consider all of the three bullet points. It is also worth pointing out that candidates needed to use their evaluation skills again and ensure they had balance in their response when discussing the various factors that impact on customer loyalty and how it may positively or negatively impact.

Supporting you

Useful contacts and links

Our friendly subject team is on hand to support you between 8.30am and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday.

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